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"Give light and the people will find their own way."

John T. O'Rourke, Editor — Ray F. Slack, Business Manager

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Donovan to the Rescue

BROOKLYN Lawyer James B. Donovan is making a career of springing prisoners caught up in Fidel Castro's web.

On his latest expedition to Cuba, Mr. Donovan came home with nine Americans who accidentally happened on Castro's imprisoned island because of a shipwreck, and a missionary Castro accused of spying for the Central Intelligence Agency.

It was the same Donovan who last winter managed the ransom of 1113 of the prisoners from the Bay of Pigs fiasco of two years ago. Recently, he got out two women who had been held by Castro's jailers. And it was he who negotiated the trade of the Soviet spy, Col. Rudolph Abel, for the U-2 pilot, Francis Powers.

It could be that Mr. Donovan got started on this unique career because the Brooklyn Bar Association in 1957 chose him to defend Abel at his trial. This made him a logical emissary, no doubt, in the later Powers-Abel exchange.

But the deal for the Bay of Pigs prisoners was another story. Altho Mr. Donovan was backed by the $53 million in ransom goods, it took months to wangle Castro into releasing the prisoners. In the case of the nine shipwrecked men just liberated, Mr. Donovan apparently had no more going for him than his talent for persuasion—which must be enormous.

When the Brooklyn Bar Association appointed Mr. Donovan to defend Col. Abel (somebody had to do it) the bar president said they had to have a lawyer of character and ability whose loyalty was "beyond question." In his operations since, Mr. Donovan has made good on those qualifications. He did get a medal from the CIA for the Powers trade—but in view of his services more recently the medal seems a pittance.

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